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Kangaspuro, Markku

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Naming the War and Framing the Nation in Russian Public Discussion¹

ABSTRACT: Fundamental changes in Europe's political map following the end of the Cold War have led to a new competition of hegemonic interpretations of history and national memory. In particular this has happened in the former socialist Eastern European countries (notably in the Baltic States, Poland, and Western Ukraine) where there has been a big demand to establish a new state identity distancing these countries from the socialist past. For the Russian socio-cultural and political environment the given identity political demand has created a challenging terrain in which symbolic, and irrevocably political, resources for national identity are forced to be calibrated in line with domestic and foreign policy concerns. In this regard, the public usage of "The Great Patriotic War" and its ramifications has been the most notable manifestation, which exhibits the political significance of history in these identity debates. In order to grasp the manifestations of this significance, this article examines the uses of the terms "The Great Patriotic War" (*Velikaia Otechestvennaia voina*, VOV) and "The Second World War" (*Vtoraia mirovaia voina*, VMV) in the Russian mainstream media over the course of the last ten years. For this purpose the Integrum databases (Russian-language media corpus of more than 400 million documents) provide a productive tool for specified queries related to VOV and VMV allowing the examination of major themes that these two terms activate in the Russian public discourse. We argue that whereas the VOV signifies the "inner" canonized framework for discussing the war within society, it is the VMV which figures as VOV's counterpoint in terms of activating "outer" frameworks for the war's public discussion. In relation to broader identity political context, the study expands the question of how the era of the Second World War is treated in Russia, and the potential limits of this discussion.

INTRODUCTION

Fundamental changes in Europe's political map following the end of the Cold War have established a situation, which has led to a new competition of hegemonic interpretations of history and national memory. In particular this has happened in the former socialist Eastern European countries (notably in the Baltic States, Poland, and Ukraine) where there has been a sustained demand to establish a new state identity distancing these countries from both their own socialist past and from the Soviet Union. In Russia, given the demands of identity politics in its neighbourhood, symbolic, and irrevocably political, resources for national identity are forced to be calibrated in line with domestic and foreign policy concerns. Events linked to the era of the Second World War

¹ We would like to acknowledge the constructive comments made by seminar audiences in St. Petersburg and Helsinki, and by two anonymous referees.

have been the epicentre of these political debates. This is not exceptional since war histories have always been a crucial basis for the identity of nations. On the one hand, war represents people's extreme sufferings and sacrifices for the nation and, on the other, the utmost collective mobilization of the people to a heroic struggle for its autonomy. In this regard, it is not so important what the "real" history is but how it is interpreted and received. As Ernst Renan has written, "getting history wrong is part of being a nation."²

For many Russians the overwhelming importance of the Second World War era has been manifest in the usage of the somewhat exclusive reference to it as the Great Patriotic War (*Velikaia Otechestvennaia voina*), that is, the war between the Soviet Union and Nazi-Germany in 1941–1945. Besides this patriotic term, the universal term for the war, the Second World War (*Vtoraia mirovaia voina*), is also used in the Russian language, to refer more generally to what in the West is meant by that nomenclature, i.e. the war of 1939–1945. Although these designations have different meanings in terms of the time span and the various participants of the war (e.g., the war of a particular nation against the enemy, and the nation in the general world war), in this article we suggest that their use in Russian public discussion reveals productive insights into the current history and identity politics debates over the past. We are interested to see how the two Russian designations relating to the Second World War era, namely the Great Patriotic War and the Second World War, function in the context of current Russian nation building: what kind of frameworks concerning Russia's national identity did these "discourse-signifiers" activate in Russian public discussion during the first ten years of Vladimir Putin's political leadership, that is, between the years 2000–2010? Given our understanding that the media is the most important and illuminating forum of public discussion, a temporal manifestation of it, our data are selected from Russia's mainstream media. With the help of the Integrum databases³ our objective is to take an overview of those items which appear under the search words "The Great Patriotic War," and those items which appear under the search words "The Second World War." Since our standpoint is that the Great Patriotic War is intrinsically linked to the patriotic framework in terms of discussing the war as part of Russia's post-Soviet identity politics, the use of the Second World War begs the question of what public discussions are activated by this term, and how they are related to the usage of the Great Patriotic War. Thereafter, we will

² Ernst Renan, as cited in Eric Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990) 12.

³ Integrum is the largest collection of Russian-language databases in Russia and in the CIS countries and covers a wide range of topics. In March 2010 Integrum contained approximately 400 million documents related to Russia. The scope of more than 5000 databases covers all national and regional newspapers and magazines, statistics, official publications, archives of the leading national and international information agencies, full texts of more than 500 literary works, dictionaries, and more.

examine a selected portion of the articles mentioned in the given searches in order to perceive the central themes that are linked to the public usage of these designations.

THE GREAT PATRIOTIC WAR FROM THE 1990S TO THE 2000S

The currently used official narrative of the Great Patriotic War⁴ was originally produced in the 1960s–1970s when the Brezhnev era was declared to have reached the stage of “developed socialism” in the USSR, distinct from the earlier messianic ideology of the building communism.⁵ The ongoing stage of the development of the USSR needed to be validated by heroic sacrifice, and the official memory and commemoration of the war was ideal for this purpose.⁶ In addition, the role of Stalin in that victory has been central for many participants of the war, as well as many quarters of the Communist party during and after the Soviet Union. From the viewpoint of Mikhail Gorbachev’s reformist policies, his speech marking the fortieth anniversary of the USSR’s victory in 1985 could be seen as the first true challenge in treating the war’s memory since the beginning of *perestroika*: how to handle the role of Stalin? According to Nina Tumarkin,⁷ Gorbachev aimed to downplay the role of Stalin by mentioning his name only once in that speech, but regardless of this attempt to cut Stalin down to size, it obviously fulfilled the previous Brezhnev-era tradition of the commemoration: after stating the name of Stalin, Gorbachev’s speech was interrupted by public applause, lasting seventeen seconds.⁸ With these remarks, Tumarkin wrote in her 1994 book that the 40th anniversary of the victory in

⁴ The first appearance of the term was in *Pravda* on page 4 on 23 June 1941, which was the first day that the public was officially informed about the beginning of the war. This was an article titled “The Great Patriotic War of the Soviet People” followed by the subtitle “Our Cause Is a Just One.” In this article, the new designation sought to galvanize a full-scale mobilization of the Soviet state against the enemy and drew parallels to the victory in the battle of Lake Peipus by Alexander Nevsky in 1242, as well as to its terminological origin, the victory against Napoleon in “The Patriotic War” in 1812. Available at *East View Information Services Online Databases*: <<http://dlib.eastview.com/sources/article.jsp?issueId=935416&pageIssue=4#anchor>> (Accessed 20 February 2012).

⁵ Boris Dubin, “‘Krovavaia’ voina i ‘velikaia’ pobeda,” *Otechestvennye zapiski* 5 (2004): <http://magazines.russ.ru/oz/2004/5/2004_5_5.html> (Accessed 20 February 2012); Olga Davidova, “Bronze Soldier Goes Transnational: Mediascapes and the Formation of Identities in Internet Discussions,” *Ethnopolitics* 7.4 (2008): 391–411; Nikolai Koposov, *Pamiat’ strogogo rezhima: Istoriia i politika v Rossii* (Moskva: Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie, 2011).

⁶ Davidova [page?].

⁷ Nina Tumarkin, *The Living and the Dead: The Rise and Fall of the Cult of World War II in Russia* (New York: Basic Books, 1995) 35.

⁸ Tumarkin 35.

1985 “turned out to be the last full-scale, overblown Soviet megaholiday,” and for many veterans “it was their last hurrah.”⁹ Tumarkin is no doubt correct in stating that the 1985 celebration was the last big Soviet celebration of the war, especially in light of the year 1995 [seems odd as this was post-Soviet: how about “given the collapse of the USSR in 1991”?]. On the eve of the 50th anniversary, the following passage from *Izvestiia*, one of Russia’s central newspapers, exhibits how this half-century event was framed:

The Chechen Republic was not planned as the brightest illustration of the drama of half a century of history. But it turned out to be so. On the threshold of that Victory Stalin exiled Chechens to Kazakhstan. On the threshold of this anniversary Yeltsin with Grachev and Yerin have destroyed Grozny, and in attempting to discipline Dudaev and the Dudaevians, they have hardened the Chechen people. But is it the case that 1945 is so far from 1995; is the bridge between the generations so in decline that such reasoning is too far-fetched? Is there a relationship of cause and effect in history at all?

It seems that there is, at least in our case. Sad metamorphoses of a great Victory have predetermined the role of two factors. Or, if you wish, one factor, inside of which, like a cocoon, matured another. The first factor is the nature of the one-party totalitarian system which the Victory has only strengthened, sealed it with the mark of competency and superiority. The second factor is the nature of the elite (or the nomenklatura), which produced this system, and is in turn, immortalizing it.¹⁰

This passage, published a couple of years after the end of the Soviet Union, sees the forthcoming victory (without using a capital in the word “great”) celebration within the context of the war in Chechnya, the historical dimension of the eviction of Chechens to Kazakhstan by Stalin, as well as Soviet political corruption, which it argues the celebration only strengthens. With regard to “unmaking the Soviet” in the early 1990s and the catastrophic war in Chechnya, such neglect of Victory Day becomes fairly understandable, since it was seen as a negative reminiscent of the Soviet past. In general, the 50-year anniversary was treated with relative neglect.¹¹ However, Tumarkin was, it seems, incorrect about the future that followed 1995 in relation to the war’s commemoration. The cult of the Great Patriotic War and “Hurrah” in the name of the war have not faded away, anything but, despite the rapidly decreasing number of veterans and other witnesses of the war. Indeed, the mid-1990s is a partial turning point in terms of the re-emergence of Soviet tones in post-Soviet Russia. According to sociological polls, it was in the mid-1990s that the harsh realities of the collapse

⁹ Tumarkin 29.

¹⁰ *Izvestiia* 6 May 1995. [full bibliographical info is needed: author, title, page # or link with access date if known, etc.; also, here and elsewhere: is this your own translation? If so, add a note here: Unless otherwise indicated, all translations are ours.]

¹¹ Davidova 400; Ian Levchenko, “Na voinu kak domoi,” *Kriticheskaia Massa* 3 (2004): <<http://magazines.russ.ru/km/2004/3/lev13-pr.html>> (Accessed 20 February 2012).

of the Soviet system began to outweigh the positive associations of the West and the criticism of “the Soviet yesterday” that many Russians had had in the early 1990s.¹² Since the mid-1990s, the symbols of the Soviet past and its nostalgic associations have strengthened their role as a repertoire of national identity for many Russians, and the re-activation of the Great Patriotic War is part of this process.¹³ Within this consensual recognition, the re-activation of the mythic war narrative in the 2000s has become a central resource of the political elite in terms of identity politics. Thus, it is reasonable to suggest that in creating official communities of feeling on the basis of national unity amidst the socio-cultural chaos and fragmentation experienced in the 1990s, Putin’s official Russia has largely invested in maintaining and developing the importance of the Great Patriotic War.

Concerning public representations of the war, Lara Ryazanova-Clarke describes the changes in narrating the commemoration of the 1945 victory as a struggle between heretical and orthodox discourses in the Russian mainstream media.¹⁴ That is, the general tendency in the 1990s of narrating previously sacred Soviet events within a discourse that is completely “heretical” in relation to Soviet-era orthodoxy. [fragment?] The passage above is an illuminating example of this heresy which, according to Ryazanova-Clarke, proved to be unsuitable for such a unifying and pedagogical theme as victory in the Great Patriotic War. This led to a certain hybridity of dissenting and former orthodox forms in the early years of Putin’s presidency. Moreover, the resulting hybridity tends to lurch in one or another direction, the revisionist or the orthodox. In light of these concepts the current commemorative framework of Victory Day, at least since 2005, has shown that the direction taken has been the orthodox one. As we see, a rather different framework is given by *Izvestiia* in 2005 in comparison to 1995: [QUESTION TO AUTHOR: IF IT’S THE 65TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE GREAT VICTORY, WOULDN’T THIS BE 2010?]

The country celebrated the 65th anniversary of the Great Victory. The jubilee turned out to be exceptional in terms of the festivities, the number of visitors participating in them, as well as the level of influence on world politics. As was assumed by *Izvestiia*, the main theme of the ceremonies, meetings, and negotiations was History. Or, more precisely, how it is interpreted by Russia and the West. At the Moscow celebrations all the heads of state—from Bush to Lukashenko—shook hands with

¹² Boris Dubin, “Zapad, granitsa, osobyi put’: simbolika ‘drugogo’ v politicheskoi mifologii Rossii,” *Neprikosnovennyi zapas* 3 (2001): <<http://magazines.russ.ru/nz/2001/3/dub.html>> (Accessed 20 February 2012); Boris Dubin, *Rossia nulevykh: politicheskaiia kul’tura, istoricheskaiia pamiat’, povsednevnaia zhizn’* (Moskva: Rosspen, 2011).

¹³ Dubin, “‘Krovavaia’ voina i ‘velikaia’ pobeda”; “Zapad, granitsa, osobyi put’”; *Rossia nulevykh*.

¹⁴ Lara Ryazanova-Clarke, “Re-Creation of the Nation: Orthodox and Heterodox Discourses in Post-Soviet Russia,” *Scando-Slavica Tomus* 54 (2008): 223–239.

Vladimir Putin and spoke about the meaning of the Great Victory and the role the Russian soldier played in it.¹⁵

Although *Izvestiia* was one of Russia's central media whose publishing policy changed radically from the 1990s to the 2000s—from an explicitly state-critical to a relatively state-conformist newspaper—the passages from 1995 and 2005 illustrate the overall change that occurred in public discussion concerning Victory Day, and the Second World War era in general. As distinct from the explicit critique of the 1995 passage, the passage from 2005 emphasizes the international importance of this Russian, not historical-Soviet, national event, the “Great” victory with a capital G. However, within this “orthodox” tendency there are evident changes between the 60th and the 65th anniversaries of victory as well. When the 65th anniversary took place, President Dmitry Medvedev pointed out in an interview in *Izvestiia* on 7 May 2010 that the victory was not the victory of Stalin, his totalitarian regime, and his generals but, instead, the victory of the people.¹⁶ Medvedev also commented on Stalin's role as a war leader, explicitly denouncing his crimes: “So despite the fact that he worked hard, despite the fact that under his leadership the country flourished in certain respects, what was done to our own people cannot be forgiven.” Hence, the president distanced victory in the war from the Soviet state and communist ideology and gave credit for the victory to the people and the Red Army. Furthermore, in 2010 for the first time the Kremlin forbade local officials to display Stalin's pictures on the streets during the celebrations of Victory Day.¹⁷ Medvedev also underlined Russia's official anti-Stalinist attitude, although he added that veterans have a right to appreciate Stalin as a war commander. In this vein, an exceptional aspect can be seen in the interview's articulated plurality, not only by the president, but also by those reactions which did not support such relativization: hundreds of commentaries on the interview on *Izvestiia*'s online-version were extremely critical towards the president's views.

¹⁵ *Izvestiia* 11 May 2005. [full bibliographical info is needed: author, title, page # or link with access date if known, etc.]

¹⁶ Dmitrii Medvedev, “Nam ne nado stesniat'sia rasskazyvat' pravdu o voine—tu pravdu, kotoruiu my vystradali,” *Izvestiia* 7 May 2010: <<http://www.izvestiia.ru/news/361448>>; “Interview Given to *Izvestiia* Newspaper,” *President of Russia* 7 May 2010: <<http://eng.kremlin.ru/news/295>> (Accessed 8 February 2012).

¹⁷ However, in several localities outside Moscow and St. Petersburg Stalin's pictures were present at these celebrations, yet in some places initiatives to reject new statues of Stalin had been made as well. Elena Iarovikova, “V Iakutii ustanovili pamiatnik Stalinu,” *Telekanal Life News* 27 November 2009: <<http://lifenews.ru/news/4615>>; “Kommunisty khotiat ‘nagradit’ Iakutsk pamiatnikom Stalinu,” *SakhaNews* 30 January 2010: <<http://www.lsn.ru/37662.html>>; “V Saratove kommunisty pristupili k sozdaniiu pamiatnika Stalinu,” *MK.RU* 9 February 2010: <<http://www.mk.ru/social/news/2010/02/09/426904-v-saratove-kommunistyi-pristupili-k-sozdaniyu-pamyatnika-stalinu.html>> (Accessed 15 February 2012).

Medvedev's re-evaluation of the meaning of Russia's essential national commemoration provides an excellent account of history politics in which the very commemorative act is actually a contest over the relevance of history and particular memories for future action. In Russia, discourse over the Second World War era in terms of the Great Patriotic War, and Stalin's role in it, has wider connotations for discussions of Russia's development models, orientation in international relations, culture, trade, and political system. To provide an example, one commonly accepted Russian understanding of history is that a strong central executive power (vertical power) is a precondition of success. At this point, the Soviet legacy and Stalin enter the picture. Usually references are also made to the Napoleonic wars and the Time of Troubles, which are represented as the fatal consequences of having a weak state. Accordingly, the weakness of the regime not only undermines Russia's respect and influence in international relations but endangers the very existence of the state. The Second World War era and the role of Stalin as Commander-in-Chief are used as proof for the necessity of a strong, vertical presidential power and, on the other hand, a warning of the risks of an authoritarian regime. For others, Stalin and his forced modernization (industrialization) policy was an indispensable precondition for the victory in the Great Patriotic War. Yet for others he was an exception and distortion in Russia's civilization, a cruel dictator, and personally guilty of the catastrophic defeats at the front in the early years of the war.

In sum, public discussion of the war's meaning in post-Soviet Russia is anything but a straightforward shift from the "heresy" of the 1990s to the "orthodoxy" of the first decade of this millennium, in spite of the concepts' general validity in describing the representational change between the two decades. Rather, the discussion of the war's meaning is a tense discursive reproduction of the war which does not draw the nation's own boundaries of identity exclusively, but also contributes to European states' national identities at large. This is especially the case between Russia and its neighbours when it comes to naming the events of the Second World War era. Whereas Russia's neighbours speak about the Molotov-Ribbentrop treaty, occupation, and the Winter War, Russia hardly mentions the treaty, speaks mainly about a border conflict between the Soviet Union and Finland, and the Baltic countries' agreement to join the Soviet Union, etc. Or, if Finland has the Continuation War after the Interim Peace and Poland has her divide between the Soviet Union and Germany, Russia prefers to focus on the Soviet Union's Great Patriotic War that began in 1941. In this regard, public histories and national memories have been under constant confrontation between the countries, which have had an impact on their academic histories as well. Attitudes change slowly and, particularly when it comes to popular histories and national memories of wars, emotions are such a crucial part of national identity that several generations have to pass before a more objective and calm discussion of these issues is possible.

THE USES OF “THE GREAT PATRIOTIC WAR” AND “THE SECOND WORLD WAR”
IN THE DATA

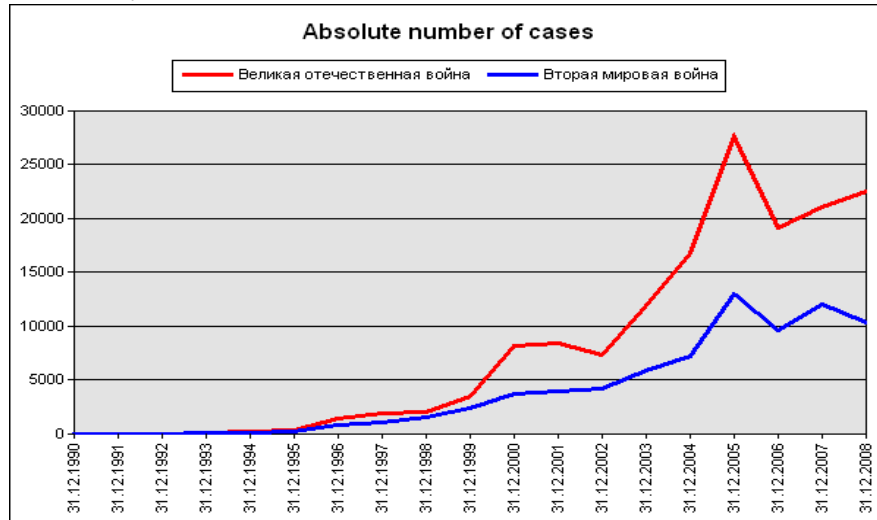
To provide a reasonable range of data, we chose two databases (that is, corpuses of media sources) from the Integrum, the central press and the central news agencies.¹⁸ On the one hand, in terms of Russia’s public discussion, we consider the central press essential since these include the most important and powerful representatives of the print media in Russia. On the other hand, owing to the exclusion of television channels from our data,¹⁹ the central news agencies partially compensate for this absence since they play an important role in nationwide information flows. The role of the news provided by news agencies is also highlighted in online information, and they play an important role in spreading pro-governmental information abroad.

To offer a general overview of the frequency of the mentions “The Great Patriotic War” and “The Second World War” in Russia’s central press and central news agencies between the years 1991–2008, the search query with the given search words draws the following the picture:

¹⁸ The corpus of the central press in the Integrum consists of 123,258 sources, and the central news agencies—96,090 sources.

¹⁹ It is generally accepted that television is the most important media in Russia although the recent protests around the elections in December 2011 and early 2012 exhibited the rapidly growing importance of the Internet in Russia’s political and social life. For more information about the role of the Internet in these protests, see Markku Lonkila, “Russian Protest On- and Offline: The Role of Social Media in the Moscow Opposition Demonstrations in December 2011,” *FIIA Briefing Paper* 98 (2012): <<http://www.fia.fi/en/publication/244/>> (Accessed 6 March 2012).

Figure 1. The frequency of the mentions “The Great Patriotic War” (upper line) and “The Second World War” (bottom line) in Russia’s central press and central news agencies between the years 1991–2008.

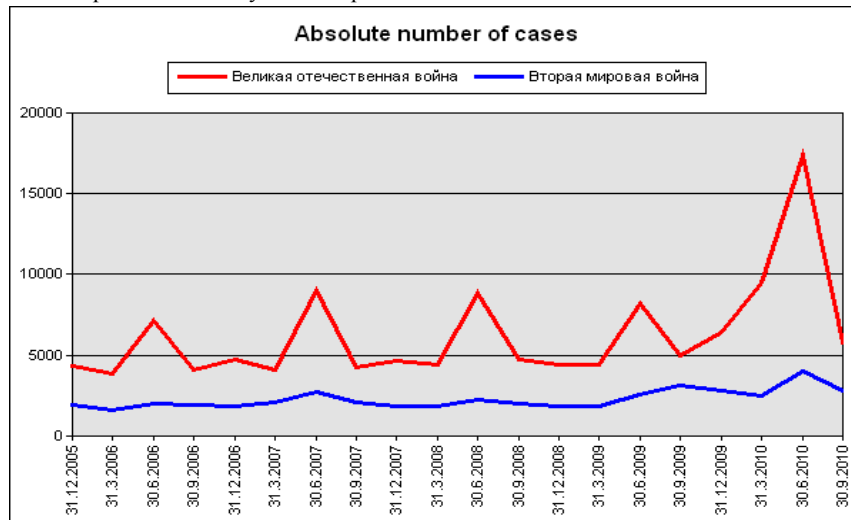


An important reservation concerning the representativeness of Integrum’s documents between the 1990s and the 2000s should be acknowledged—the clear majority of these documents are from the 2000s. However, the crucial point here is that the line of “The Great Patriotic War” splits off from “The Second World War” line. Indeed, as the lines indicate, this becomes apparent in 1999–2000 when Putin took over as president. The divide also indicates the major difference between the overall frequencies of the terms: in the period 1991–2009 the query “The Great Patriotic War” yielded 177,948 documents²⁰ and “The Second World War” yielded 91,082 documents.²¹ In short, there is a clear emphasis on the Great Patriotic War in Russia’s public discussion over the last twenty years. The upward surge in both lines in 2005 reflects the general activation of the war theme around the 60th anniversary of the victory. In addition, a closer look at the period between the 60th and 65th anniversaries illustrates that “The Great Patriotic War” theme has several peaks in the line, as the next figure shows:

²⁰ 105,850 of these are from the central press, and 72,098 are from the central news agencies.

²¹ 56,962 of these are from the central press and 34,120 from the central news agencies.

Figure 2. The frequency of the mentions “The Great Patriotic War” (upper line) and “The Second World War” (bottom line) in Russia’s central press and central news agencies over the period of January 2006–September 2010.



While the line for the number of mentions of “The Second World War” appears to be relative flat, having slight peaks around Victory Days, “The Great Patriotic War” line has a striking number of clear peaks that occur around the middle of the year (for example, around Victory Day celebrations in May), and even greater peak culminating around the last major celebration, the 65th anniversary. Let us now take a more qualitative look at these differences and focus on the period 2000–2010. We chose to use Integrum’s popularity rating based on the search words “The Great Patriotic War” and “The Second World War” to select relevant samples of items for closer examination. This popularity is based on Integrum’s classification of the most relevant media on the basis of the selected databases (in our case, the central press and the central news agencies). In addition, the chosen items related to the given search words in the case of particular media (for example, the newspaper *Kommersant*) are ranked by Integrum based on the frequency of the search word(s) in the designated item as well as on outside links to the given item.²² The latter is measurable with regard to the media’s online versions which are highly representative in the case of Russia’s central press. In our investigation, Integrum’s popularity classification ranked 701 documents with both search terms. In order to improve the representativeness of the given searches, we chose the ten most popular and

²² Fedor Romanenko and Lev Gershenzon, “IPS ‘Integrum.’ Istoriia sozdaniia, opisaniie, ispol'zovanie,” in *Integrum: tochnye metody i gumanitarnye nauki*, edited by Galina Nikiporets-Tagikawa (Moskva: “Letnii sad,” 2006) 34.

the ten least popular items for closer examination. With a search conducted on 19 August 2011 for “The Great Patriotic War,” the result was the following:

Table 1. The popularity classification of documents from the central press and the central news agencies in Integrum using the search term “The Great Patriotic War.”

The ten most popular documents (headlines, source and date)	The ten least popular documents (headlines, source and date)
1. Veterans Were Asked to Give Their Medals, <i>Kommersant</i> 3 March 2010. ²³	692. From the Editors: The Field of Patriotism, <i>Vedomosti</i> 28 January 2009. ²⁸
2. The Order of the Government of the Russian Federation Given on 29 April 2010 “About Changes of the Order of the Government of the Russian Federation Given on 31 January 2009, N. 1176,” <i>Rossiiskaia gazeta</i> 7 May 2010. ²⁴	693. The State Is Responsible for Preserving the Memory of the War Against Fascism, Gryzlov [remove? See fn.], <i>RIA Novosti – The Multimedia Tape</i> 8 May 2009. ²⁹
3. Instead of Social Benefits, the Heroes of the War and Work Receive 795 Rubles per Month, <i>Izvestiia</i> 20 May 2004. ²⁵	694. In Honour of the 65th Anniversary of the Victory in the Great Patriotic War, Russia will Hold Days of Military Glory, Ukase Of The President, <i>RIA Novosti “Hot Line”</i> 16 April 2007. ³⁰
4. “To be carried on the left side of the breast,” <i>Gazeta</i> 17 August 2004. ²⁶	695. Putin Signed the Ukase Concerning the Improvement of Material Conditions of Certain Citizen Groups in Connection with the 60th Anniversary of the Victory, <i>ITAR-TASS</i> 30 March 2005. ³¹
5. In Kamchatka at the Beginning of the Year, 39 Veterans of the Great Patriotic War Received an Apartment, <i>IA Regnum</i> 5 May 2010. ²⁷	696. Medvedev Established the Jubilee Medal “65 Years of Victory in the Great Patriotic War,” <i>RIA Novosti “hot line”</i> 6 March 2009. ³²

²³ The original: Ветеранов просят сдать ордена.

²⁴ The original: Постановление Правительства Российской Федерации от 29 апреля 2010 г. N 290 г. Москва “О внесении изменений в постановление Правительства Российской Федерации от 31 декабря 2009 г. N 1176.”

²⁵ The original: ВМЕСТО ЛЬГОТ ГЕРОИ ВОЙНЫ И ТРУДА ПОЛУЧАТ ПО 795 РУБЛЕЙ В МЕСЯЦ. [Why cap? Use sentence case?]

²⁶ The original: “носится на левой стороне груди.”

²⁷ The original: На Камчатке с начала года жилье получили 39 ветеранов Великой Отечественной войны.

²⁸ The original: От редакции: Поле патриотизма.

²⁹ The original: Государство ответственно за сохранение памяти о войне с фашизмом, Грызлов [is this the author? Remove here and in the table to be consistent with other titles?].

Table 1 continued.

The ten most popular documents (headlines, source and date)	The ten least popular documents (headlines, source and date)
6. From the Golden Shoulder Marks and Back, <i>Ekspert</i> 31 March 2008. ³³	697. The Medal “65 Years of Victory in the Great Patriotic War” Was Established by the Ukase of the President of the RF, <i>ITAR-TASS</i> 6 March 2009. ³⁸
7. Veterans in Kursk Against “the Legs of Rutskoï,” <i>Profil</i> 7 August 2000. ³⁴	698. A Celebration of the 65th Anniversary of the Great Victory and the Honouring of Veterans of the Great Patriotic War Took Place in the Consulate of the RF in San Francisco, <i>ITAR-TASS News from the Five Continents</i> 9 May 2010. ³⁹
8. The “Complete Solution” of an Old Problem, <i>Nezavisimaia gazeta</i> 11 July 2008. ³⁵	699. Karelia Doubled the Financing of the Region’s Gas Supply, <i>RIA Novosti. TEK</i> 27 April 2010. ⁴⁰
9. The Government Against Cheap Vodka, <i>Kommersant’-Den’gi</i> 5 May 2008. ³⁶	700. THE CERTIFICATE, The Legislation About Housing for Veterans, <i>RIA Novosti. Macro-Economy and Regulation</i> 13 January 2010. ⁴¹
10. You Will Answer for the Brother, <i>Kompania</i> 21 July 2003. ³⁷	701. The Pension of Invalids of the Great Patriotic War in the Moscow Region, <i>RIA Novosti. Finance and Banks</i> 23 March 2010. ⁴²

³⁰ The original: В ознаменование 65-й годовщины Победы в Великой Отечественной войне в России пройдут дни воинской славы, указ [add cap?] президента.

³¹ The original: Путин подписал Указ о мерах по улучшению материального положения некоторых категорий граждан РФ в связи с 60-летием Победы.

³² The original: Медведев учредил юбилейную медаль “65 лет Победы в Великой Отечественной войне.”

³³ The original: “Эксперт” #13 (602) от 31 марта 2008 года [provide the title instead].

³⁴ The original: Курские ветераны против “ножек Руцкого.”

³⁵ The original: “ПОЛНОЕ РЕШЕНИЕ” ДАВНЕЙ ПРОБЛЕМЫ. [why cap?]

³⁶ The original: Правительство против дешевой водки.

³⁷ The original: За брата ответишь.

³⁸ The original: Указом президента РФ учреждена медаль “65 лет Победы в Великой Отечественной войне.”

³⁹ The original: Празднование 65-летия Великой Победы и чествование ветеранов Великой Отечественной войны прошли в генконсульстве РФ в Сан-Франциско.

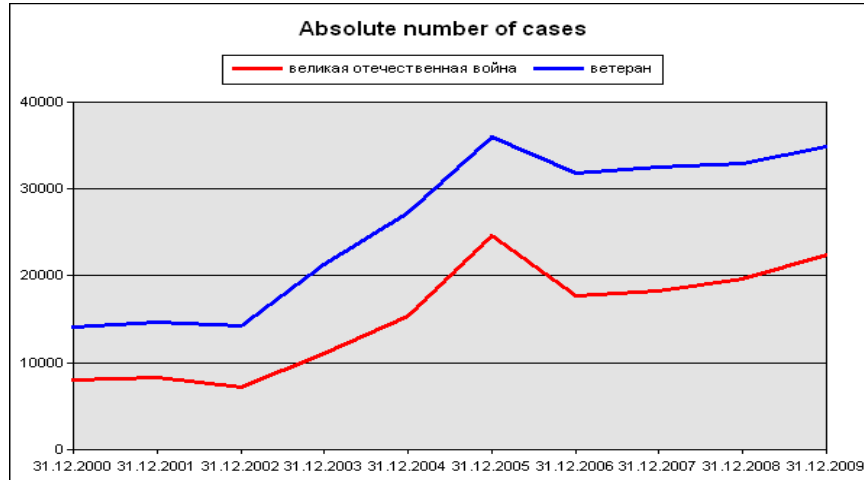
⁴⁰ The original: Карелия вдвое увеличит финансирование газификации региона.

⁴¹ The original: СПРАВКА [add comma?] Законодательство о жилье для ветеранов.

⁴² The original: Пенсия инвалидов Великой Отечественной войны в Подмоскowie.

The clearest message that these twenty items convey is that the designation of “The Great Patriotic War” in Russia’s public discussion is commonly associated with veterans, and vice-versa.⁴³ This relationship reveals that veterans are predominantly associated in the public mind with the Great Patriotic War rather than other less heroic or successful wars: veterans of the wars in Afghanistan and Chechnya, in particular, are downplayed. The terminological correlation between the Great Patriotic War and veterans can be tracked with Integrum’s statistics over the period 2001–2009 as well:

Figure 3. The frequency of the mentions “The Great Patriotic War” (bottom line) and “Veteran” (upper line) in Russia’s central press and central news agencies over the period 2001–2009.

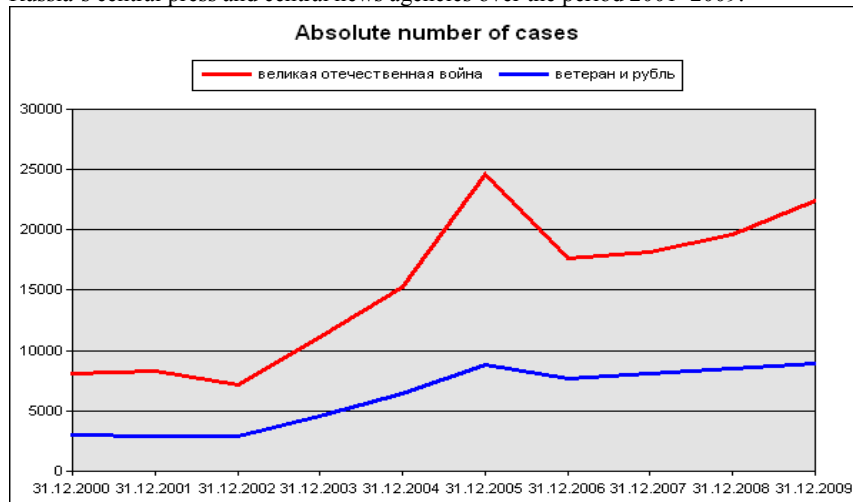


This veteran-centeredness can be divided into two major groups, the socio-political and the patriotic: nine of these twenty issues—and six of the ten most relevant, according to Integrum’s classification—deal with veterans’ socio-political issues (especially housing), while another major group deals with veterans’ medals and Victory Day celebrations. In the socio-political group two discourses can be detected. Items 2, 5, 8, 695, 700, and 701 mention state policies and programs for veterans. Without any critical discussion (with a reservation regarding item 8 in which a tiny implicit critique can be read in terms of the state’s ability to accomplish its policies), this discourse of the socio-political group can be labelled as a state-supportive one. On the other hand, another discourse of the socio-political group (items 3, 7, and 9) is clearly critical. It calls into question the state’s measures for the improvement of the

⁴³ It is worth adding that in Russia as a legacy of Soviet times there are multiple categories of veterans related to different spheres of society, and not necessarily to wars.

veterans' situation. For instance, whereas the article by *Profil'* (7) is relatively mild in its criticism, the article "Instead of Social Benefits, the Heroes of the War and Work Receive 795 Rubles per Month" by *Izvestiia* (3) strongly accuses the state of "starting the experiment of eliminating benefits with people whose number is decreasing year by year."⁴⁴ While *Izvestiia* represents a harsh patriotic critique against the state, *Kommersant''-Den'gi* (9) shows its critique through sarcasm: by reporting the state's plans to provide free cars for veterans whose average age is more than eighty. A correlation between veterans' socio-political issues and the Great Patriotic War in Russia's public discussion can be seen as well, although not as clearly as with the Great Patriotic War and veterans:

Figure 4. The frequency of the mentions "The Great Patriotic War" (upper line) and "Veteran and ruble" (documents which contain these two words) (bottom line) in Russia's central press and central news agencies over the period 2001–2009.



As distinct from the discourses of the socio-political group, the patriotic group is more homogenous. Except for the article by *Vedomosti* (692), all the items of this group are conformist in terms of official state patriotism. This is evident in the reporting of the new medals in honour of the veterans (693, 694, 696, and 697) and by the celebrations related to the veterans and the victory (698), as well as in the report about veterans putting their medals in temporary storage in order to prevent thefts when they are away from home (1). In items 6 and 699, the Great Patriotic War figures less frequently, either within a general historical description of the Red Army (6) or in terms of local infrastructure plans which are about to be initiated to coincide with the war's commemoration

⁴⁴ Provide reference for the quote.

(699). Therefore, these two can be placed in the patriotic group as well. On the other hand, the article in the newspaper *Vedomosti* “The Field of Patriotism” (692) is the only item in this 20-item sample which deals with a critical dimension of the Great Patriotic War. It discusses millions of victims who died for the Motherland, and who still do not have decent graves and memorials. Hence, the criticism in this article is not a criticism of the narrative of the Great Patriotic War but of the insufficient commemoration of it. In this regard it resembles the criticism of the article by *Izvestiia* (3) by providing a patriotic critique of the state.

The only exception in this sample is the article in the magazine *Kompaniia* “You Will Answer for the Brother” (10), which cannot be placed in any of the given socio-political and patriotic groups. It represents a sort of terminological anomaly in so far as it deals with Russian films and states in its introduction that “for the third time over the course of the century, after the October Revolution and the Great Patriotic War, the main hero of the country has become the man with a gun.”⁴⁵ However, even with this oddity, the use of the term shows its general importance in relation to key moments in the country’s history.

Within the aforementioned history and memory politics, the heightened role of socio-political issues concerning veterans, and the patriotic treasuring of veterans and victory, is clearly understandable. Both dimensions support the special importance that the Great Patriotic War has acquired in Putin’s Russia. At the same time, the focus on veterans exhibits the nature of the Great Patriotic War’s history politics per se. On the one hand, the commemorative investment in honour of the veterans provides a form of symbolic cohesion for today’s society since—according to the officially bolstered narrative—it was the veterans who guaranteed the unity of the country in the past, and, thus, today’s commemoration of them guarantees the nation’s unity in the present. On the other hand, the monetization of Soviet-era benefits over the last ten years has evoked loud protests among elderly people. Therefore, it seems that this contested process is seemingly aimed to be justified through veterans by allowing new monetized benefits particularly for them. [awkward structure] No doubt this state-driven attempt relies on the supposed respect for the veterans amongst the population. Another side of this attempt is the evident fact of this group’s relatively low representativeness in Russian society owing to the advanced age of veterans. Furthermore, these elderly people have a highly restricted capacity to create any potential protest against the monetization. [Add transition] Let us now examine the 20-item sample concerning the term “The Second World War”:

⁴⁵ Provide reference for the quote.

Table 2. The popularity classification of documents from the central press and the central news agencies in Integrum with the search term “The Second World War.”

The ten most popular documents (headlines, source and date)	The ten least popular documents (headlines, source and date)
1. Poland Reconsidered History on the Channel “Russia,” <i>Kommersant</i> 26 June 2009. ⁴⁶	692. A Drier Which Is Not a Simple One, <i>Agrobiznes</i> 15 June 2003. ⁵⁶
2. Divided by Trenches, <i>Rossiiskaia gazeta</i> 2 September 2009. ⁴⁷	693. Page 13, <i>Kursiv</i> 1 December 2007.
3. The Precise Moment of Victory Will Become a Celebration, <i>Izvestiia</i> 8 July 2010. ⁴⁸	694. Page 27, <i>Flekso Plus</i> 1 April 2009.
4. “The Germans and the Japanese call us sissies and playboys,” <i>Gazeta</i> 31 May 2004. ⁴⁹	695. Page 79, <i>Standart</i> 27 July 2007.
5. Yushchenko Decided to Bring “Objective Information” About the Second World War to Ukraine, <i>IA Regnum</i> 21 August 2009. ⁵⁰	696. An Exact Control on the Setting of the Global Crisis, <i>FSP / Flexography and Special Printing</i> 15 August 2008. ⁵⁷
6. Bridges in Time and Space, <i>Ekspert</i> 20 September 2010. ⁵¹	697. Conservatism. How Can Conservatism Co-exist with the Legalization of Same-Sex Marriages and Other Marvels of the “Progressive Humanity”? <i>Oksent [A..?]</i> 8 July 2009. ⁵⁸
7. About Defending the Decisions of the Nuremberg Tribunal, <i>Profil</i> 2 July 2007. ⁵²	698. The World Market, <i>MIS-Inform. The Discussion Centre of Current Issues, Overview of Publications</i> 18 May 2010. ⁵⁹
8. Our Great Victory, <i>Nezavisimaia Gazeta</i> 30 April 2010. ⁵³	699. Column 20, <i>Rossiiskaia gazeta-Week</i> 30 September 2010.
9. A Portrait with a Dark Past, <i>Kommersant</i> “-Den’gi” 12 July 2010. ⁵⁴	700. Aerodynamic Pipe in the Centre of NASA, <i>Algorithm Media</i> 23 September 2009. ⁶⁰
10. The Price of Victory, <i>Kompaniia</i> 21 March 2000. ⁵⁵	701. Page 30, <i>CIO</i> 16 July 2008.

⁴⁶ The original: Польша пересмотрела историю по “России.” [check translation]

⁴⁷ The original: Разошлись по окопам. [check translation]

⁴⁸ The original: Победную точку сделают праздником.

⁴⁹ The original: “немцы и японцы называют нас нацией слабаков и плейбоев.”

⁵⁰ The original: Ющенко решил донести Украине “объективную информацию” о Второй мировой войне.

⁵¹ The original: Мосты во времени и пространстве.

⁵² The original: О защите решений Нюрнбергского трибунала.

⁵³ The original: Наша Великая Победа.

⁵⁴ The original: Портрет с темным прошлым.

Owing to the lesser frequency of the term “The Second World War” in Russian public debates (see Figure 1), this table has more diversity than “The Great Patriotic War” in terms of clearly defined discussion frames. This becomes evident with less popular items in particular. Items 692–696 and 700–701 are more like article-advertisements. They deal with particular technological innovations, and the search term figures in them as an occasional mention, although these items illustrate how current technological developments are at a certain point related to the Second World War era. On the other hand, eight of the ten most popular items (1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 10) reveal the foreign challenges that Russia faces concerning the present treatment of the Second World War era. Moreover, the three most popular items of “The Second World War” sample mention Stalin (as a whole in this sample he appears in five documents), while his name is completely absent in “The Great Patriotic War” sample. The article by *Kommersant* (1) discusses Poland’s accusation that Russia is falsifying the history of the Second World War, and that this is particularly true of the state television channel “Russia.” The source of the problem was this channel’s prime time program *News of the Week* that aired on 21 June 2009 in which Poland is portrayed as being responsible for events leading up to the war, including Stalin’s and Hitler’s negotiations. Russia’s response to Poland’s diplomatic note was based mainly on an argument about freedom of expression according to which the state is not responsible for any remarks made on a television channel (even one strictly controlled by the state use). By mentioning such aspects of the episode, a particular criticism of the state’s use of history politics can be seen in *Kommersant*’s article [awkward use of the passive voice and dangling modifier?]. By contrast, the article “Divided by Trenches” (2) in the state’s official newspaper *Rossiiskaia gazeta* is clearly compatible with the Putin-era’s emphasis on “de-sovietizing” and “russifying” the war. This same feature is present in the 2005 passage of *Izvestiia* and in Medvedev’s interview in 2010 (see above). *Rossiiskaia gazeta* (2) points out that “unfortunately today’s generations of Polish and Baltic people think that the Molotov-Ribbentrop-pact started the war.”⁶¹ It is noteworthy that although the newspaper downplays the role of the pact in starting the war, it

⁵⁵ The original: Цена победы.

⁵⁶ The original: Сушка, но не простая.

⁵⁷ The original: Точный контроль на фоне всемирного кризиса. [check translation]

⁵⁸ The original: Консерватизм. Как может быть консерватизм сосуществовать с легализацией однополых браков и прочими чудесами “прогрессивного человечества”?

⁵⁹ The original: Мировой рынок.

⁶⁰ The original: Аэродинамическая труба в центре NASA.

⁶¹ Provide reference for the quote.

does not ignore it. In this vein it also separates Russia's victory and contribution to today's Europe from the negative connotations associated with the period 1945–1991 for Eastern Europe: "Russia no doubt bore the greatest burden for Europe's liberation from the Brown Plague and trapped Hitler in the Reich's office in Berlin. However, then the USSR began to spread a communist police system to all the liberated countries of Eastern Europe."⁶²

The pro-government news agency *IA Regnum*'s report (5) lists some of President Viktor Yushchenko's plans to create an official interpretation of the Second World War in Ukraine, but does not provide an explicit evaluative view of these plans. However, the agency's critical attitude becomes apparent with its use of quotation marks in the headline. The item "About Defending the Decisions of the Nuremberg Tribunal," (7) by the journal *Profil* is about a published petition to the president and the government of the Russian Federation by a television host Mikhail Leont'ev, known for his overly patriotic and nationalist views. Unsurprisingly, the petition is very critical of any attempt to re-evaluate the Soviet Union's role in the Second World War, and asks the state's authorities to defend Russia's interests in this regard. The article "Our Great Victory" (8) by *Nezavisimaja gazeta* is openly patriotic and underlines the importance of "our victory over fascism in the Second World War."⁶³ In this item the term "The Great Patriotic War" is also present, but, as distinct from the major frames of that sample, this article focuses on wartime events and their current importance for Russia. Interestingly, despite a highly detailed focus on various numeric facts about the Red Army's military activities, the article does not mention Stalin. A similar thematic focus can be found in the article "The Price of Victory" (10) by the journal *Kompaniia* but with a completely different evaluation. Whereas item 8 is openly patriotic, this article is sarcastic, and hence critical, by focusing on various peculiarities of Stalin's failed industrialization policies in the final stages of, and after, the war.

Items 4, 9, and 699 are mostly curiosities although they also shed light on the public discussion of the Second World War. Item 4 is about the establishment of a memorial in the United States for Americans who perished in the Second World War. Item 9 is about the famous painting "Portrait of Wally" by the Austrian Egon Schiele, and the painting's destiny during the Second World War. Item 699 discusses Russian and Soviet soldiers in Near East conflicts after the Second World War. Item 697 tells an astonishing story concerning Russia's image abroad in an interview with a visible political protagonist of the Kremlin, Pavel Danilin. Instead of reflecting on the various pitfalls to be found in Russia's and the USSR's image in the West, Danilin sees the issue of image principally in terms of the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of state propaganda. He states that "during the Second World War the propaganda-

⁶² Provide reference for the quote.

⁶³ Provide reference for the quote.

machine worked excellently,”⁶⁴ and thus, the state’s image then was excellent as well. The story’s headline—a quote from one of Danilin’s answers in the interview—is also revealing in terms of the value orientations of his views.

BRINGING THE WARS TOGETHER: THE KURILE ISLANDS

There are four articles, two in both samples, which discuss the Kurile Islands and the interpretation of the wartime era in that region. This appears to be a revealing topic in terms of reconciling the national Great Patriotic War with the war’s global dimension, the Second World War. Moreover, given its obvious societal importance as a history-politics topic, it is worth providing a short overview of the issue.

The dispute over the Kurile and Sakhalin Islands between Russia and Japan goes as far back as the 19th century, but the recent political contests originate from the Soviet Union’s invasion of the Kurile Islands on 9 August 1945. That took place three days after the atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima, and six days before Japan accepted the Potsdam Proclamation and surrendered unconditionally to the Allied Powers. The Soviet Union’s decision to annex the Kurile Islands was based on the Yalta (1945) and Potsdam (1945) agreements that carved out spheres of influence between the Allied Powers after the war. The Red Army completed its occupation of the Southern Sakhalin and Kurile Islands on 5 September 1945.

It is not only events linked to the Second World War, which generate challenges; the Islands’ Cold War-era role does so as well. The Islands were the subject of dispute at the San Francisco peace conference in 1951 when the Western allies and Japan signed a peace treaty.⁶⁵ In 1955 Japan and the Soviet Union began separate peace negotiations, after which the Soviet Union was prepared to hand over two of the southern islands to Japan. At that point the United States’ secretary of state John Foster Dulles pushed Japan to keep up her demands for all of the “Northern Territories” (i.e., the Kurile Islands) instead of coming to a negotiated peace agreement with the Soviet Union. The move was targeted against the normalization of Japanese-Russian relations and the signing

⁶⁴ Provide reference for the quote.

⁶⁵ The Soviet Union withdrew from the conference because the Western Powers did not accept China’s participation after the communists, led by Mao Zedong, took power in 1949. The late 1940s and 1950s saw the beginning of a struggle for spheres of influence in East Asia. In addition, the outbreak of the Cold War soured relations between the USSR and the West, former wartime allies, in all spheres of international relations. Nonetheless, the West did not deny the Soviet Union’s right to a reward (occupied areas) for entering the war against Imperial Japan. Thus, in 1951, in San Francisco, Japan did not get support from Western delegations over its demands for the return of the Kurile Islands.

of a peace treaty, in which Dulles with his Japanese allies was successful.⁶⁶ A third phase in the discussions on the Islands began during Gorbachev's and Boris Yeltsin's rule in the late 1980s and early 1990s when both leaders explored the possibility of "transferring" control over two of the four southernmost islands to Japan following the signing of a formal peace treaty, as the two countries were still technically at war. Essentially, their offer did not contain anything new in comparison to the non-ratified agreement between the Soviet Union and Japan in 1955. The new aspect was that political changes after the Soviet Union's collapse enhanced expectations.⁶⁷ Putin's presidency along with Russia's strengthened economic position brought progress back to the starting point,⁶⁸ and in general, Russia's harder stance not only touched relations with Japan. [awkward?] It was applied from the beginning of Putin's term as a whole to Russia's foreign policy.

There are two articles in "The Great Patriotic War" sample (4 and 695) in which the Kurile issue is linked to the war veterans' medals for the Great Patriotic War as well as the social benefits in 2004–2005 in honour of the 60th anniversary of the Victory. Both articles speak about Putin's *ukase* concerning the various categories of veterans eligible to receive medals and social benefits. These categories unquestionably exhibit the tension between the Great Patriotic War and the Second World War. Although the medals marked the 60th Victory Day in the Great Patriotic War, the veterans of the wars with Japan and Finland are mentioned separately in terms of having a similar right to receive veterans' benefits. The fact that this was mentioned separately reveals that the traditional Victory Day celebrations on May 9th and the benefits related to it were not regarded as applying to either the Winter War in 1939–1940 (the war against Finland) or the war against Japan in August–September 1945. This is understandable in terms of the "orthodox" Great Patriotic War against fascism.

⁶⁶ Gregory Clark, "Japan's Other Big Year 2000," *The Japan Times* 3 March 1999: <<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/text/ea19990303gc.html>> (Accessed 22 February 2012). Interestingly, the British government admitted the legitimacy of the Soviet Union's control over the disputed islands throughout the Cold War. In 1979, as recently revealed documents show, even Margaret Thatcher's government sided with the Soviet Union in the dispute. "Thatcher's Britain Backed Soviet Control of Isles," *The Japan Times* 6 July 2010: <<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/text/nn20100706a7.html>> (Accessed 22 February 2012).

⁶⁷ Undoubtedly, at that time Russia was hoping for new investments from Japan, and Japan was waiting for concessions and a more flexible attitude from Russia after the collapse of the Soviet Union. The thaw in Japanese-Russian relations culminated in a joint statement in 1997 according to which they promised to conclude a peace pact by the end of 2000.

⁶⁸ See, for instance, Putin's talk with Prime Minister Mori. "Putin Arrives for Isle Talks with Mori: Russian Leader Denies Negotiations Under Way to Return Disputed Islands," *The Japan Times* 4 September 2000: <<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/text/nn20000904a2.html>> (Accessed 22 February 2012).

Neither of these wars was heroic in any sense, and neither was directly related to the defence of the Motherland against the fascist invader and occupier. Nevertheless, the officially supported patriotism and the demands to improve the living conditions of war veterans have established a situation in which the domestic use of the Great Patriotic War (to elevate war veterans) seems to cover all veterans of the Second World War.

This logic has led also to the next step in defining the scope of the Great Patriotic War. The symbolic importance of this term is an important resource in defining and justifying Russia's current borders including the disputed Kurile Islands. That is also the background of the initiative made in the Duma concerning the new commemoration day to be celebrated on September 2nd—The Day of the End of the Second World War—accepted by President Medvedev on 25 July 2010. In “The Second World War” sample this initiative was reported in the article “The Victory's Final Point Will Become a Celebration” (3) by *Izvestiia*. The article refers to the lack of a commemoration day for the end of the Second World War, without mentioning the Kurile issue. This silence partially reveals the generally known result of the war against Japan and, from Russia's viewpoint, the Kurile Islands as “natural” part of Russia. Interestingly, the initiator of the idea for a commemoration day, Sergei Sobianin, points out in the article that it was Stalin who launched the original plan for a commemoration day for the victory over Japan, and it was celebrated on September 2nd. Thereafter Sobianin explains that the intention is to connect Russia to the rest of Europe, in celebrating the end of the Second World War on the day when Japan surrendered to Allied forces, and not to underline the war against Japan. However, the reasoning behind the initiative in the Duma—Sobianin points out—is to highlight the symbolic significance of the day “to confirm the justification behind the Soviet Union's participation in the war against Japan in accordance with her responsibilities to the allies.” Finally, Sobianin adds that although Japan is not mentioned in relation to this commemoration day, “you, no doubt, understand with whom we waged the war.” The deputy speaker of the Duma, Oleg Morozov, concerning the discussion of this initiative in the Duma, pointed out that “all participants of the war against Japan are also included as participants of the Great Patriotic War.”⁶⁹ This statement shows brilliantly the overlapping but also contested relationship of the Great Patriotic War and the Second World War in Russia's history politics. Furthermore, it demonstrates how the content of these terms are negotiated in time and space. In this case Morozov's statement includes two messages: on the one hand, during the Second World War, the Soviet Union was a “legitimate” part of the allied forces with all the rights that this gave her and,

⁶⁹ Provide reference for these quotes.

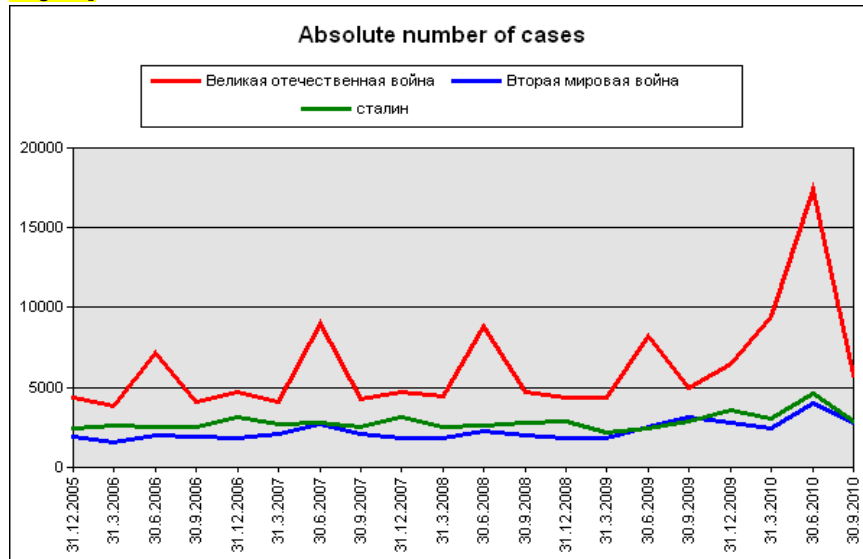
on the other, concerning the Great Patriotic War, the Kurile Islands are part of the great Russian motherland redeemed by the veterans' sacrifices.

The article "Bridges in Time and Space" by *Ekspert* (6), also written in 2010, refers directly to Japan's political claims to its "Northern Territories." The article discusses the declaration of Japan's parliament, which demands control over the two islands "illegally occupied by Russia." The focus of the whole article is to connect the Kurile question to the patriotic aspect of an indivisible Russia (the Great Patriotic War) and its unchangeable borders (the contribution of the Great Patriotic War to the Second World War) as confirmed by the final result of the Second World War and the Allied agreements. The article brings history politics to the fore as a resource in the dispute over the Kurile Islands and in relations between Russia and Japan. The article refers several times to the "international scientific conference" and the parade held on September 2nd in South Sakhalin as an expression of Russia's historical right to control these areas. However, the context is not just the Second World War; the Russo-Japanese War in 1904–1905 is also mentioned.

CONCLUSION

It appears that "The Great Patriotic War" in our data is a term which is principally related to Russia's internal treasuring of the war's memory which becomes apparent, on the one hand, through acute social policy issues, and, on the other, through relatively ritualistic stories on annual Victory Day celebrations. From the viewpoint of history politics, in both cases the major symbolic importance is focused on the veterans. By contrast, "The Second World War" is the term that activates Russia's foreign concerns in terms of the war's memory and interpretations of its history. The frequency with which Stalin is mentioned in these items under these search terms reflects Russia's public discussion between the 60th and 65th anniversaries of Victory Day, as the following figure reveals:

Figure 5. The frequency of the mentions “The Great Patriotic War” (upper line), “Stalin” (middle line), and “The Second World War” (bottom line) in Russia’s central press and central news agencies over the period 2005–2009. [Stalin needs to be capitalized on the diagram]



In our samples the absence of Stalin in “The Great Patriotic War” and its relative presence in “The Second World War” is understandable given the canonized dimension, or “orthodoxy,” of Russia’s official history politics and its natural reluctance to raise any disturbing issues, and that of Stalin in particular.⁷⁰ Accordingly, the usage of the Second World War is forced to acknowledge Stalin’s role, but there is an attempt to separate Stalin from the Soviet-era’s history politics. In this vein, this result is compatible with Medvedev’s evaluation of the meaning of the Victory as the triumph of the non-Soviet, common Russian people (see above his interview in *Izvestiia* in 7 May 2010).

In light of domestic and foreign aspects of Russia’s history politics, manifested by uses of the Great Patriotic War and the Second World War, the issue of the Kurile Islands is a revealing case. Moreover, this case shows how these terms are used in different ways when addressing different audiences. In terms of the Kurile Islands and South Sakhalin, the Great Patriotic War is used

⁷⁰ Indeed, there is a clear correlation between the designations “The Great Patriotic War” and “Stalin” as well. The query with the search terms “The Great Patriotic War” and “Stalin” (documents in which both are present) yielded a similar type of topics as the query with the search term “The Second World War”: the foreign aspects of the war and various challenges in terms of history politics.

to justify the uncontested borders (veterans' sacrifices) in East Asia and Russian patriotic feelings and loyalty to the state whereas the Second World War is used as an argument to bolster Russia's border arrangements with Japan and East Asia by pointing out that they had been confirmed internationally. At the same time, it aims to define Russia's position as an indispensable member of the Allied Forces in the Second World War, and more importantly, Russia's current role as a legitimate and prestigious actor in Europe as well as a European actor in Asia. This means that within the framework of the Second World War, the Kurile Islands are implicitly used as a resource to define Russia's role as a global player in international politics (USA and China), as a full member of the United Nations' Security Council (one of the big winners), as well as to emphasize its current military might [unparallel structure] (nuclear weapons and presence in all oceans) that extends Russia's power from Europe to Asia and the Pacific.

The public usage of the Russian nomenclatures related to the Second World War era demonstrates that these designations are anything but transparently appearing synonyms. In fact, their deployment reveals acute history politics ramifications in Putin's Russia, their differences, limits, and attempts at reconciliation between national and transnational second world wars. In addition to the usage of the Second World War, transnational discourses on the Second World War era have forced Russia to redefine the usage of the Great Patriotic War as well, used mainly for domestic patriotic consumption. I would suggest rewriting this last sentence because it's pivotal, but unclear. Do you mean that the GPW was used in the past for domestic consumption, but now requires a wider application? You also need to vary the verb 'use' and noun 'usage'.